



**Public Comment Period
is Now Open!!
Send us Comments
about the Refuge or
CCP!! See Page 6.**



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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge

Planning Update 1 - Summer 2008

Comprehensive Conservation Planning Begins in the Summer

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is embarking on an important process to develop a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). This plan will help to guide overall Refuge management for the next 15 years. Your ideas and comments will be an important part of the process, so I encourage you to participate.

Before we begin the process, I would like to provide background about the Refuge's history and current management. In this update, you will also find some information about the National Wildlife Refuge System and how comprehensive conservation planning fits into refuge management.

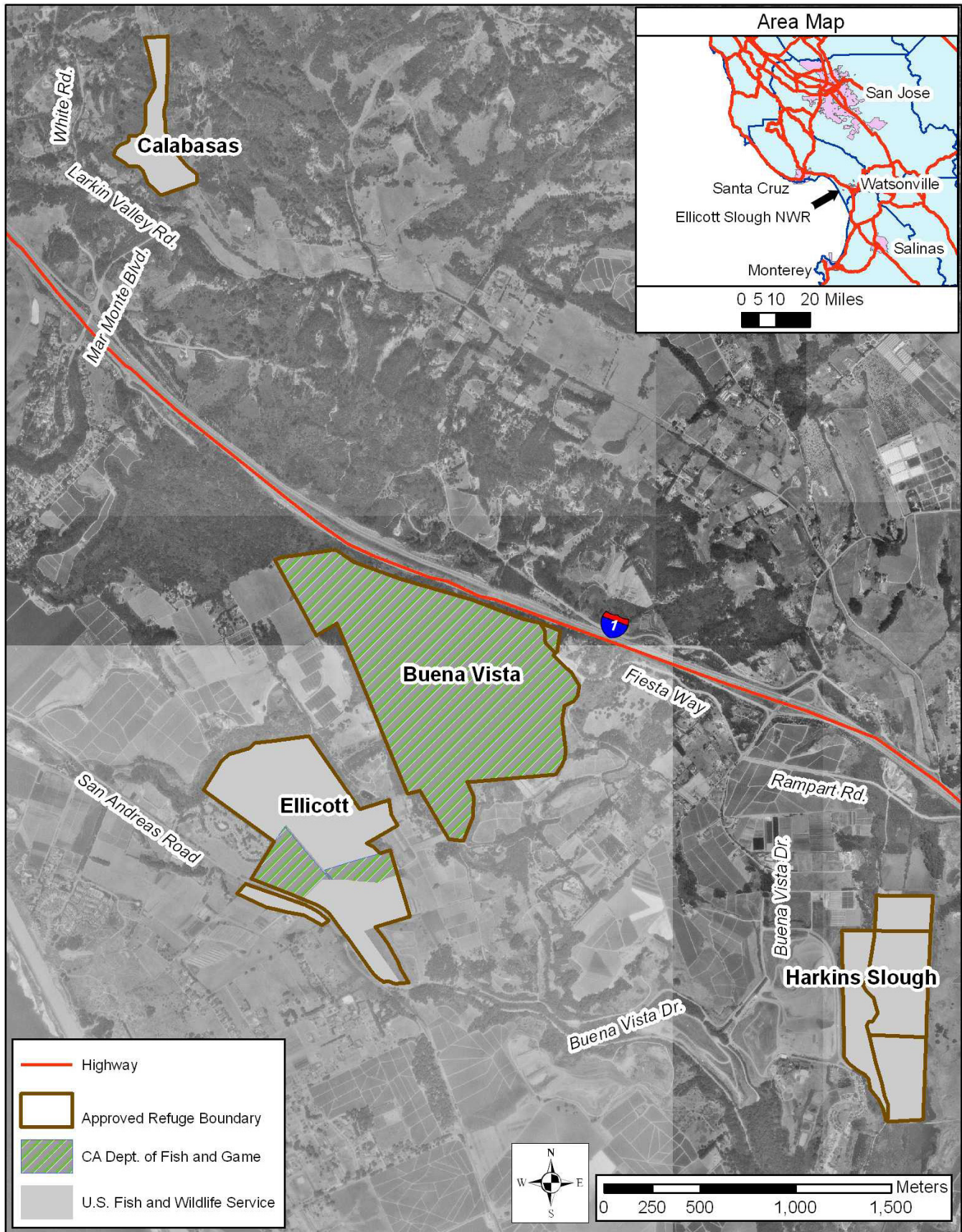
This first "Planning Update" describes the beginning of the planning process and provides information about the Refuge. We will refer to information provided in this planning update throughout the CCP process. This update also kicks off our first public comment period. We welcome your comments, suggestions, and questions about the CCP. Please contact Winnie Chan, the Refuge Planner, or myself at (510)792-0222 or sfbaynwrc@fws.gov.

We would also like to use this update to solicit interest for an initial public scoping meeting. Please fill out the card on the outside page if you are interested in attending an initial meeting. Depending on the level of interest, we will hold an initial scoping meeting. We will also plan to hold a meeting midway through the process when draft alternatives have been developed.

I hope you will feel free to contact me or Winnie Chan at the addresses shown on page 5 if you have any questions.

Diane Kodama
Refuge Manager

Ellicott Slough NWR



The Refuge Location and Description

Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge is located in Santa Cruz County within the Monterey Bay area. The Refuge, established in 1975 to protect the endangered Santa Cruz long-toed salamander, supports two of the twenty known breeding populations. Current management efforts focus on enhancing both wetland and upland habitat for the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander and the threatened California tiger salamander.

The Refuge is made up of three units (see Page 2): Ellicott (158 acres), Calabasas (31 acres), and Harkins Slough (109 acres). A portion of the Ellicott Unit is owned by the California Department of Fish and Game and cooperatively managed by the Refuge. The Buena Vista unit is in the process of being acquired.

Due to the sensitivity of the habitat, the Refuge is closed to the public. However, Refuge staff currently provide birdwatching tours (when requested) at the Harkins Slough unit and work with a local high school to provide environmental education opportunities at the Ellicott unit.

Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge is part of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex, which consists of seven refuges within the San Francisco and Monterey Bay areas, and is headquartered in Fremont, California.

Refuge Biology

A variety of habitats occur on the Refuge, including ephemeral ponds, permanent freshwater wetland, oak woodland, grassland and chaparral. These habitats support three federally-listed species - the threatened California red-legged frog and California tiger salamander, and the endangered Robust spineflower.

The Refuge Purpose

The Refuge was established based on the acts below to provide habitat for migratory birds and endangered species.

“to conserve (A) fish or wildlife which are listed as endangered species or threatened species or (B) plants ...16 U.S.C. 1534 (Endangered Species Act of 1973)

... the conservation of the wetlands of the Nation in order to maintain the public benefits they provide and to help fulfill international obligations contained in various migratory bird treaties and conventions ... 16 U.S.C. 3901(b) (Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986)

What is a CCP?

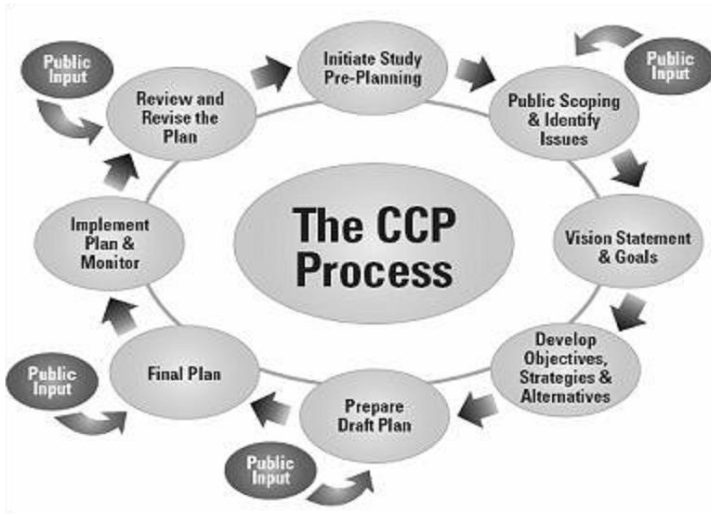
In 1997, Congress passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act. The Act defined the mission for the Refuge System, and states that all wildlife refuges must have a CCP in place by the year 2012. These plans provide a 15-year guide, using the best available scientific knowledge, to help managers achieve the purposes for which each refuge was established, and to contribute to the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Act provides the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) with guidance for managing refuges in a way that ensures the long-term conservation of fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats. Maintenance of biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health along with facilitating compatible wildlife-dependent recreation in the Refuge System are two of the important guiding principles laid out in the Act.

The CCP for the Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge will outline goals, objectives and management strategies for the Refuge for the 15-year life of the CCP. The accompanying Environmental Assessment will describe the alternatives considered and analyze the environmental effects of each proposed alternative. The Service is preparing this CCP for the following reasons:

- To provide a vision statement for the Refuge.
- To ensure that management of the Refuge reflects Refuge purposes and the mission, policies, and goals of the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- To provide the public with information about the Refuge and opportunities to comment on management actions planned for the Refuge.
- To ensure the compatibility of current and future uses of the Refuge with Refuge purposes.
- To provide long-term continuity in Refuge management.
- To provide budget justification for operations, maintenance, and facilities requests.

The CCP will be a flexible “living document.” It will be reviewed periodically to ensure that its goals, objectives, implementation strategies, and timetables are still appropriate.

The key planning steps are described in the flow chart on the following page. Currently, we are in the pre-planning phase gathering data and beginning public scoping with the release of this update.



He established Pelican Island as the nation's first bird sanctuary and went on to establish many other sanctuaries for wildlife during his tenure. This small network of sanctuaries continued to expand, eventually becoming the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The National Wildlife Refuge System is the largest system of lands in the world dedicated primarily for the conservation of wildlife. The system is spread across 50 states, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Johnston Atoll, Midway Atoll, and several other Pacific Islands. About 21 million acres on 65 refuges in the Refuge System are managed as wilderness (undeveloped Federal lands that have had limited human influence) under the Wilderness Act of 1964.

About the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

The Service manages the 100-million acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses more than 545 units in all 50 states and several U.S. territories. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices, and 81 ecological services field stations.

The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their wildlife and habitat conservation efforts.

The Service also oversees the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

About the National Wildlife Refuge System

In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt protected an island in Florida's Indian River with nesting pelicans, herons, ibis, and roseate spoonbills from feather collectors decimating their colonies.

What is the mission of the Refuge System?

Refuges are places where wildlife comes first.

"The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans." (National Wildlife Refuge Systems Improvement Act of 1997)

The Service is a "primary use agency." This means that units of the Refuge System are managed first and foremost for the benefit of fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats. Our mission differs from other federal agencies, such as the U.S. Forest Service, which focuses on forest stewardship and sustainable forest uses; the Bureau of Land Management, which deals with the productivity and multiple use of the land; and the National Park Service, which conserves scenery, wildlife, and historic objects for people's enjoyment.

What's in a name?

The Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which coordinates with California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) on a variety of management issues, including management of lands within the refuge boundary.

Many people confuse federal and state fish and wildlife agencies because their names are similar. The Service is a federal agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior. The CDFG is a department within the State of California's Resources Agency.

Our names are similar and so are our missions: both agencies are dedicated to wildlife conservation for the benefit of present and future generations. Our jurisdictions are different. The Service is the lead agency responsible for federally-listed endangered species and migratory birds, whether they are located on federal, state, or private lands. The CDFG has primary responsibility for resident fish and wildlife on state and private lands, and oversees state-listed endangered species and stream alteration issues throughout California.

Help Us Plan the Future

This first update kicks off our first 30-day public comment period as announced in the Federal Register. Over the next year, interested individuals, agencies, and organizations are invited to express their concerns and share their visions for the Refuge. We will be sending these planning updates periodically to local constituents, government agencies, private organizations, and others in the community who express interest.

We invite you to send us comments and concerns about the Refuge. Your participation is critical to the success of this planning effort. There are many ways to participate:

- Send us comments by email, mail, fax or phone.
- Request that we hold a public scoping meeting by filling out the card on the next page.

- Attend public meeting(s).
- Review and comment on the draft CCP and Environmental Assessment.

We would also be happy to talk or meet with you individually.

Please feel free to contact us

We are available to provide additional information regarding the Refuge and the planning process. Feel free to call, write, or e-mail us at sfbaynwrc@fws.gov.

If you did not receive this update through the mail and would like to be on our mailing list, or if you would like to be removed from the list, please contact us.

Winnie Chan, Refuge Planner

Diane Kodama, Refuge Manager

Mendel Stewart, Project Leader for the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex

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San Francisco Bay NWR Complex
RE: Ellicott Slough NWR CCP
9500 Thornton Avenue
Newark, CA 94560

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex
9500 Thornton Avenue
Newark, California 94560-0524
Address correction requested

Please indicate your interest in attending an initial public scoping meeting below. If there is significant interest (more than five people), we will hold an initial public scoping meeting in the next two months. Please note, we plan to hold a public meeting after draft alternatives have been developed (slated for the beginning of 2009).

- ☐ Yes, I'm interested in attending a initial public scoping meeting. Please notify me of the date.
- ☐ No, I'm not interested in attending an initial public scoping meeting, but please keep me on the mailing list.
- ☐ I'm not interested in the CCP process. Please remove me from your mailing list.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

